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Garry Wills:

Licensed Thuggery

President Ford said in his press conference that he meant to continue a policy of openness and candor. But there was nothing very candid about his first answer on the CIA's crusade against Chile's deposed and murdered president, Salvador Allende:

Ford first said our \$8 million of CIA money was spent to "take certain actions in the intelligence field." If Allende's government had fallen, we would have heard about it, and it would not have cost us \$8 million to hear about it. The aim was not to find out anything about Allende, but to do him in.

Ford went on to half-admit this, all the while painting our actions in the guise of disinterested love for the free press.

So much for campaign spending reforms. The next time the government gets after big corporations for underwriting candidates, the officers of such corporations can just say they were being philanthropic and encouraging freedom of the press.

(ITT DID in fact offer the CIA an extra million dollars for the subversion of the Chilean government, but the CIA thought it would stick with the taxpayers' money.)

Then Ford made Henry Kissinger's distinction between our attacks on Allende and the coup that overturned him. We, he claimed, did not stage or run the coup. We are expected to take the government's word for that, but various officers of our government also gave their word under oath that we were not financing the opposition, and now it turns out that we were.

It is not only less than candid, it is dis-

graceful, to pretend we are protecting another people's liberties when we undermine their economy to "prove" that communism is bad for them. If communism were so self-evidently bad, we would not need to help it along in proving its disastrous effects. And we would not have to lie to each other in the process.

Ford's first answer did not satisfy, so the question was raised again — and then he did approach candor on the subject, saying he would not quibble about whether the subversion of other peoples' governments is "permitted or authorized under international law." It is "recognized fact" that other governments do it, so we will do it too, for our own best interests. And international law be damned.

William Buckley, once a CIA agent himself, defends the Chile operation by saying that such acts are what the CIA exists for. He is right. And that is why the CIA should cease to exist.

IT BREAKS the laws of every country it operates in, beginning with our own — and makes any pretense to international morality simply ludicrous on our part. Through the CIA we proclaim a licensed thuggery to all the world.

We got along for a century and a half without an international secret police force; and it is only after we learned to live with one that we started toying with the idea of a domestic secret police plan. The development is not accidental. We had to be conditioned to our various Howard Hunts. We had to deserve them before we got them. Now we better deserve to be rid of them, and all their ilk, and all their works.

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